

The following is a listing of the claims, which replaces all prior listings.

1-47 (Canceled)

48. **(Currently amended)** A system for managing a transmission of funds for a payment initiator, comprising:

an input portion that inputs first information from a payment initiator, the first information including payment source information and payee information;

a payment platform database that includes payment platform information; and

a processor, the processor communicating with the input portion and the payment platform database so as to input the first information and access select payment platform information, the processor:

identifying a single payment source based on the payment source information, the single payment source being selected from a plurality of payment sources, the single payment source being the source of funds for the transmission of funds;

identifying, automatically without human involvement, a payee account based on the payee information;

performing, after identifying the single payment source and the payee account, an optimization determination to determine a payment mechanism to use to transfer the funds from the single payment source to the payee account, the processor using the first information and payment platform information in the optimization determination, the optimization determination performed automatically without human involvement; and

effecting the transmission of funds from the single payment source to the payee account using the payment mechanism; and

the processor identifying a single payment source includes the processor performing a

second optimization process to determine the single payment source, the first optimization process being distinct from the second optimization process; and

the processor inputs a plurality of selected payment sources, and performs the second optimization determination to determine which one of the selected payment sources is the single payment source.

49. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the processor identifying a single payment source includes the processor inputting the single payment source from the input portion.

50. (Canceled)

51. (Canceled)

52. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the input portion provides for the payment initiator to select the plurality of selected payment sources.

53. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the payment initiator is presented with at least two payment sources that meet payment schedule data and the payment initiator presented with the associated costs of the at least two sources, and the payment initiator is permitted to manually choose the single payment source.

54. (Previously presented) The system of claim 53, wherein the processor identifying a single payment source includes the processor inputting the single payment source from the input portion.

55. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein
wherein the processor determines from a set of payment mechanisms a reduced set of payment mechanisms, the reduced set being a set of payment mechanisms from which the payment mechanism is selected, the reduced set of payment mechanisms including at least two

payment mechanisms.

56. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the optimization determination comprises a calculation of at least one of payee account data, payment schedule data, payment type data and privacy data.

57. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the single payment source comprises at least one of a direct deposit account, a source credit account, a mortgage account, a securities account, a money market account, a micro payment account, an overdraft account and a stored value account.

58. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the payee account comprises at least one of a utility account, a mortgage account, a payee credit account, and a contribution account.

59. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the input portion is a telephone connection.

60. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the input portion is a network connection.

61. (Previously presented) The system of claim 60, wherein the network connection comprises a remote client from which a user may communicate transaction instructions.

62. (Previously presented) The system of claim 61, wherein the remote client comprises at least one of a computer, a network-enabled cellular telephone, a portable digital assistant, a paging device, and a set-top box.

63. (Previously presented) The system of claim 60, wherein the payment initiator comprises at least one of a consumer, a business entity and a government entity.

64. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein input portion comprises

a desktop graphical user interface directly communicating with the processor.

65. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the optimization determination includes at least one of minimizing a cost variable, fulfilling a transaction schedule, utilizing a determined affiliation between the single payment source and the payee account, maximizing security, maximizing reliability, minimizing risk, fulfilling a contractual obligation, maximizing volume discounts, aggregating a transaction amounts, maximizing a transaction amount and maximizing available bonus awards.

66. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the optimization determination includes:

the processor performing processing so as to identify an affiliation between the single payment source and the payee account; and

determining the payment mechanism based on the identified affiliation.

67. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the optimization determination comprises minimizing a cost variable, and the cost variable comprises at least one of a transaction cost charged to the payment initiator and an internal cost absorbed by a payment enabler, the payment enabler maintaining the processor.

68. (Previously presented) The system of claim 67, wherein the optimization determination comprises utilization of third party associations and payment providers.

69. (Previously presented) The system of claim 68, wherein members of the third party associations are systematically identified by at least one of real time calls to the third party association, and real time calls to a datastore containing third party association member data which is periodically updated.

70. (Previously presented) The system of claim 69, wherein an expense reduction

resulting from optimization of the cost variable is realized by at least one of the payment enabler and the payment initiator.

71. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the optimization determination comprises a systematic identification and internal settlement for closed loop payments in which the payment source and the payee account reside within one entity.

72. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the transmission of funds comprises a currency conversion.

73. (**Currently amended**) A computer implemented method for managing a transmission of funds for a payment initiator, comprising:

inputting first information from a payment initiator, the first information including payment source information and payee information;

inputting, from a payment platform database, payment platform information; and
performing processing based on the first information and the payment platform information, the processing being performed by a processor, the processing including:

identifying, automatically without human involvement, a single payment source based on the payment source information, the single payment source being selected from a plurality of payment sources, the single payment source being the source of funds for the transmission of funds;

identifying a payee account based on the payee information;

performing, after identifying the single payment source and the payee account, an optimization determination to determine a payment mechanism to use to transfer the funds from the single payment source to the payee account, the processing including using the first information and payment platform information in the optimization determination, the

optimization determination performed automatically without human involvement; and

effecting the transmission of funds from the single payment source to the payee account using the payment mechanism; and

the processor further performing a second optimization process, the second optimization process selecting the single payment source, from a plurality of payment sources, based on parameters, the first optimization process being distinct from the second optimization process.

74. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method of claim 73, wherein performing the optimization determination comprises maximizing volume discounts.

75. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method of claim 73, wherein performing the optimization determination comprises aggregating transaction amounts.

76. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method of claim 73, wherein performing the optimization determination comprises maximizing a transaction amount and maximizing available bonus awards.

77. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method of claim 73, wherein the single payment source comprises one selected from the group consisting of a checking or other demand deposit account (DDA), money market fund, securities account, stored value account, credit card account, currency account, overdraft line of credit, micro payment account, and line of credit.

78. **(Canceled)**

79. **(Currently amended)** A system for managing a transmission of funds for a payment initiator, comprising:

an input portion that inputs first information from a payment initiator, the first information including payment source information and payee information;

a payment platform database that includes payment platform information; and
a processor, the processor communicating with the input portion and the payment platform database so as to input the first information and access select payment platform information, the processor:

identifying a single payment source based on the payment source information, the single payment source being selected from a plurality of payment sources, the single payment source being the source of funds for the transmission of funds;

identifying a payee account based on the payee information;

performing, after identifying the single payment source and the payee account, a first optimization determination to determine a payment mechanism to use to transfer the funds from the single payment source to the payee account, the processor using the first information and payment platform information in performing the first optimization determination, the first optimization determination performed automatically without human involvement; and

effecting the transmission of funds from the single payment source to the payee account using the payment mechanism; and

the processor identifying a single payment source includes the processor performing a second optimization determination to determine the single payment source, the processor inputting a plurality of selected payment sources, and performing the second optimization determination to determine which one of the plurality of selected payment sources is to constitute the single payment source, the first optimization process being distinct from the second optimization process, the second optimization determination performed automatically without human involvement;

the input portion providing for the payment initiator to select the plurality of selected

payment sources; and

wherein the second optimization determination comprises a calculation of each of payee account data and payment schedule data; and

wherein the first optimization determination includes each of minimizing a cost variable, consideration of risk, and determination of whether there is an affiliation between the single payment source and the payee account.
